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Ethan Hipple
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Memorandum

TO: Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

FROM: Ethan Hipple, Deputy Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

SUBJECT: Parks Division Update

DATE: January 2018

Pesticide Ordinance

City Council passed pesticide ordinance that included exemptions recommend by staff to protect our 20,000 valuable and beloved street trees, preserve biodiversity by eliminating invasive species, and preserving the viability of our highest use athletic fields and golf course. Of 721 park acres, 710 acres (98.5%) are already pesticide free prior to the passage of this ordinance.

Cutter Street Middle Lot Winter Recreation Area

Staff have closed Cutter Street middle parking lot to parking this winter and are maintaining as a winter recreation and sledding run-out area. Situated at the bottom of our very popular sledding hill on the Eastern Promenade, the parking lot serves as a natural run-out area for kids and adults on sleds, skis and snowboards, but when it is filled with cars and snow banks, can create a very hazardous situation with sledders dodging parked cars and bailing out to avoid hazardous blocks of ice and snow. The lot will be closed to parking (and snow ban parking) throughout the winter to provide a safer sledding run-out area for the hundreds of sledders, skiers and snowboarders who use our iconic Eastern Promenade for winter fun. The lower and upper Cutter Street lots remain available for general parking and snow ban parking, and the Eastern Promenade road is also available for snow ban parking, from Congress St to Pole #33 (near East End School).

Ice Skating Ponds

Deering Oaks, Payson Park, Ludlow Pond and Riverside Skating Ponds all open for business and groomed daily.

Winter Recreation Map

Created google map to provide real-time updates for skating and sledding conditions.

<https://www.portlandmaine.gov/1906/Winter-Recreation>

Redlon Woods

Majority of city parcels in Redlon Woods accepted into Land Bank by City Council. Work continues on acquisitions to complete this open space preserve near Brighton and Stevens.

Dog Waste Enforcement



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Designated multiple Parks Supervisors as constables so that they may issue tickets to dog ordinance violations. Coordinating training.

Cousins Memorial Out to Bid

Jacob Cousins Memorial Restoration project going out to bid. This project will create a small plaza at the intersection of Eastern Promenade and Cutter St, and will involve moving the existing hidden Jacob Cousins Memorial to the plaza. The Cousins Memorial honors Jewish veterans and their contributions during times of conflict. Funding for the project from City of Portland and Friends of Eastern Prom.

Fort Gorges Special Event Planning

Site visits to Ft Gorges with Event Permitting staff, police, fire and legal to discuss possibility of future special event permitting on the island. Groups have been requesting use of this park site for special events and city staff are evaluating safety, egress, fall hazard, crowd control and other factors to determine if this will be feasible.

“A Walk In the Park” Series

Our monthly series of Park walks and lectures continued with “Portland Parks, Past and Present” slideshow on December 6th at Ocean Gateway.

- Upcoming events: XC Ski through Evergreen, February 10
- More info at: <http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>

Evergreen Cemetery Wall (Stevens Ave)

Disassembling of stone wall on Stevens avenue complete, new wall construction ongoing.

Winter Sidewalk Plowing

Parks Division Staff are responsible for clearing of 120 miles of sidewalks, as well as several school parking lots, fire stations, and city buildings. Crews have been kept very busy with a cold and snowy start to winter.

Hall School Playground

Parks staff spending more time coordinating construction management for new Hall School playground.

Baxter Trail

Developing plans, route, and interpretive signage for Baxter Trail honoring Mayor Baxter. The trail will run east to west from Baxter Boulevard, through Baxter Woods, to Evergreen Cemetery.

Skatepark Expansion

Convened Skatepark committee meeting: developing fundraising, special event, grant writing plans.

Portland, Maine



Yes. Life's good here.

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